

# FORM H – PARKS AND LANDSCAPES

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number      Area(s)      Form No.      Forms within

14-27      BEV.AB      BEV.9011     

**Town/City:** Beverly

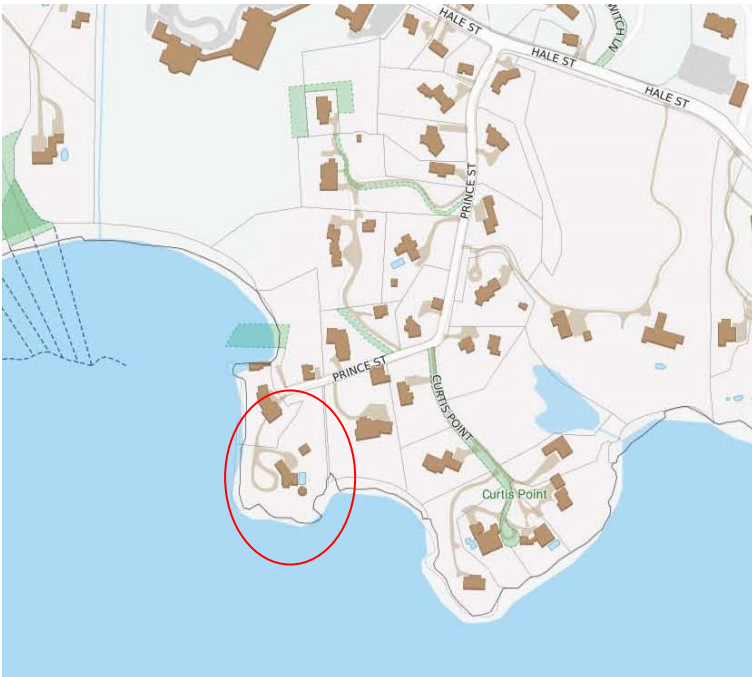
**Place** (*neighborhood or village*): Beverly Cove

## Photograph



Photo 1. View of garden looking south.

## Locus Map (*North at top of map*)



**Address or Location:** 44 Prince Street

**Name:** Guy Norman Garden, Garden at Bee Rock

**Ownership:** ☐ Public      x Private

**Type of Landscape** (*check one*):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> park                      | <input type="checkbox"/> farm land      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> green/common              | <input type="checkbox"/> mine/quarry    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> garden         | <input type="checkbox"/> training field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boulevard/parkway         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other ( <i>specify</i> ): |   |

**Date or Period:** 1905

**Source:** Little & Browne account book, collection of Historic New England

**Location of Plans:** Unknown

**Alterations/Intrusions** (*with dates*):

Removal of pergola, several concrete urns, original summer house and plant materials; addition of final atop granite archway and replacement of original plant materials (all ca. mid-20<sup>th</sup> century)

**Condition:** Very Good

**Acreage:** Approximately 1,200 SF

**Setting:** Located between the house at 44 Prince Street and Atlantic Ocean, between Brackenbury Beach and Crescent Beach

**Recorded by:** Martha Lyon and Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** Beverly Historic District Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): February 2019

# INVENTORY FORM H CONTINUATION SHEET

BEVERLY

44 PRINCE STREET GARDEN

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT

*Describe topography and layout. Note structures such as bandstands, gazebos, sheds, stone walls, monuments, and fountains. Note landscaping features such as formal plantings, agricultural plantings, and bodies of water. If possible, compare current appearance with original.*

The historic garden at 44 Prince Street is located in the Beverly Cove area of Beverly, along the easternmost side of the cove (Brackenbury Beach) and to the west of Curtis Point. The 1,200 square-foot garden is part of a 1.916-acre property containing a house (built in ca. 1950 and enlarged after 2005) and summerhouse (built after 2005). The property is sited high on a promontory overlooking the Atlantic Ocean with 270-degree views of the Beverly coastline, the east end of Salem, and Baker's and other islands. To reach the garden, visitors traveling east on Hale Street (Route 127) turn right on Prince Street and proceed south and westward. Number 44 lies at the terminus of Prince Street, bordered on the east, west and north sides by private residences and on the south by the Atlantic Ocean. Crescent Beach, a small, private stretch of sand, sits below the property to the east. The paved driveway at 44 Prince Street curves through mature shade trees and winds around the west and southwest sides of the property, ending in a cul-de-sac at the west side of the house. The garden stands to the east and south of this cul-de-sac, between the house and ocean.

A mortared granite block and concrete retaining wall (Photo 4) supports the garden on its east, south and west sides, curving along the natural line of the coast and forming a semi-circle or horseshoe shape projecting outward towards the ocean. Large rock ledges – some as tall as ten feet in height -- support the base of much of the wall, protecting the structure from the breaking tides. The wall is highest at the east end where the ledge is less exposed, and lowest at the west end where ledge is highly prominent, allowing for a level top of wall around the garden. The upper four to five feet of wall is made of concrete, approximately 12 inches wide, and formed into a wave pattern along a portion of its length.

An external pathway along the garden's west edge leads visitors to the main entrance. This path is constructed of bluestone pavers and pea stone with granite treads and passes through a rusticated granite block archway and into the garden. A mushroom-shaped finial ornaments the top of the arch. The garden consists of five terraces – upper, second, third, fourth and lower -- separated by mortared granite block retaining wall. The terraces differ from one another in size, shape and function, each resembling an individual outdoor room. The semi-circular upper terrace (Photo 2) contains a seating area and firepit while the second terrace is lawn. The third (Photo 3) and fourth terraces are arranged along a central access, extending north to south, connected via a central path. The third contains four planted beds and the fourth is a semi-circular plaza overlooking the sea. The lower terrace is an intimate, geomorphic-shaped seating area shaded by a deciduous tree. Granite steps link the terraces internally.

In addition to the granite block and concrete retaining wall, granite block entry arch, and step structures, the garden contains four concrete planters in the shape of urns, spaced evenly atop the fourth terrace's semi-circular wall. A pair of Doric-style concrete columns topped with orbs stand on the concrete wall along the east side of the third terrace. A concrete seat is tucked between the columns inside the wall. The rectangular and geomorphic-shaped plant beds on the third terrace are edged with concrete blocks, and concrete pavers cover the terrace floor. Exposed aggregate concrete covers the surface of the fourth terrace. The current owner has filled the beds with woody shrubs and herbaceous perennials. The garden contains just one small deciduous tree, planted along the steps between the third and lower terraces.

While the original plan for the garden is not known to exist, it appears to have been designed to meld with the surrounding landscape. The four low mortared granite terrace walls extend westward outside the garden wall, connecting to adjacent rock ledges. The upper terrace wall extends further westward, following long the natural line of the coast and supporting the driveway. The remnants of a pier and the granite-treaded approach to it, remain to the west of the garden.

# INVENTORY FORM H CONTINUATION SHEET

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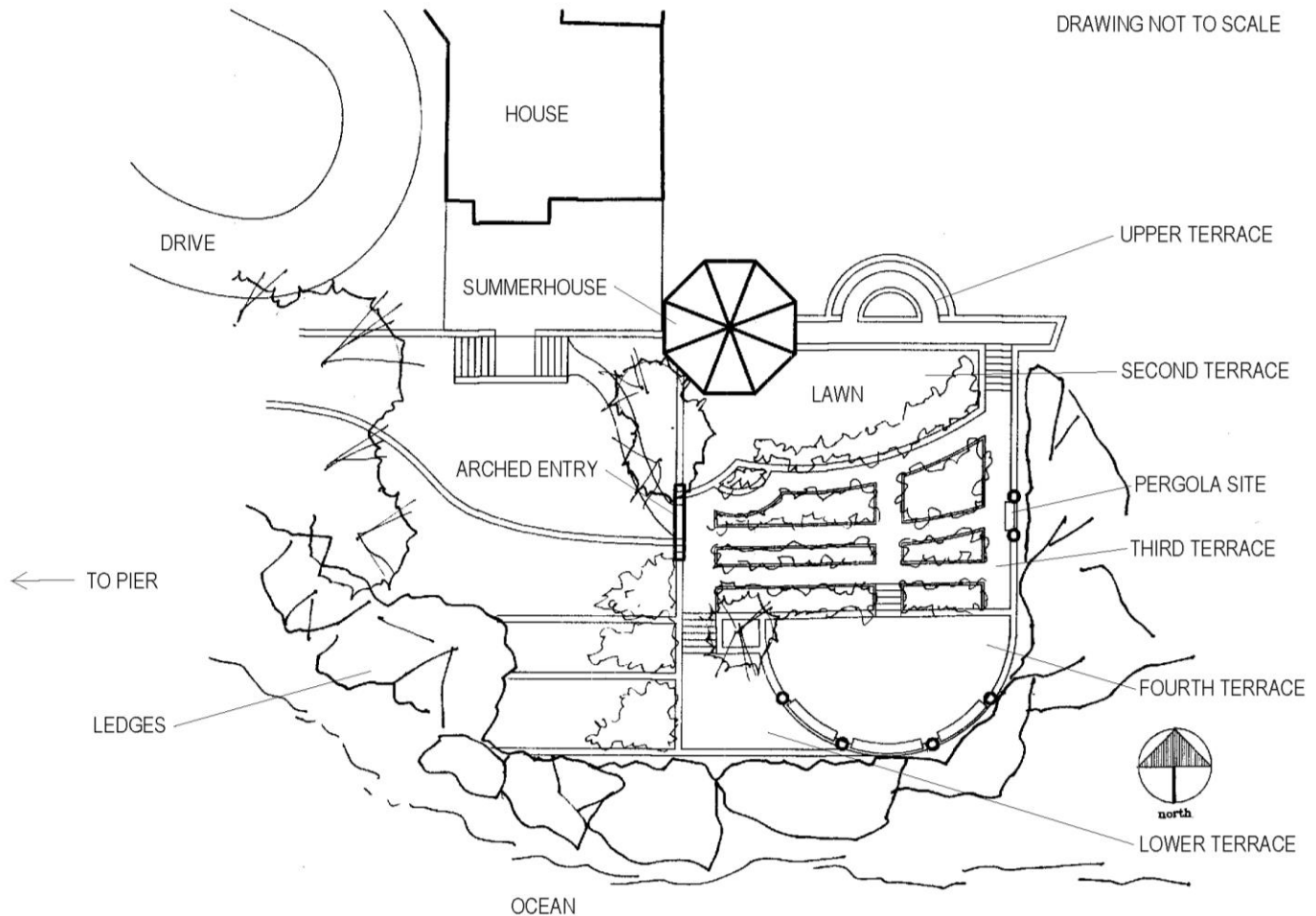
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Despite several changes in ownership, demolition of the original house, and construction and subsequent enlargement of a new house, most of the original garden structure, while somewhat weather-worn, remains intact. Images taken of the garden in 1907 for *American Homes and Gardens* show the same walls, entry arch, plant beds and concrete pavement. The original rustic summerhouse at the north edge of the garden has been replaced by a contemporary structure. The plantings appeared to be largely perennials and annuals, and several more urns stood on the wall between the second and third terraces.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss history of use. Evaluate the historical associations of the landscape/park with the community.*

The area of Beverly known as Beverly Cove became a popular spot for summer homes for wealthy families between 1844 and 1860, after the coming of the railroad to Beverly (1838) and Beverly Farms (to the northeast of Beverly Cove, 1847), and continuing into the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The first homes were built by Massachusetts residents, but by the 1890s, many businessmen and entrepreneurs from outside the state purchased property. Ownership of the property at the end of Prince Street overlooking the sea reflects this pattern. The 1872 Beers atlas shows this area of Beverly Cove as largely undeveloped, but in the same year the land was purchased by John G. Cushing, Esquire, a retired merchant from Boston. Between 1872 and 1897, Cushing built a home on the estate. Similar to many of the other summer houses built in Beverly Cove, the Cushing house stood at the end of a long drive ending in a cul-de-sac and overlooked the ocean. Comparison between atlases of Beverly published in 1897, 1907 and 1919 suggest that the house was sited in the same

*Continuation sheet 2*

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location as the existing house, at the east side of the cul-de-sac. The atlases also show that Cushing built a set of stables along the north side of the property.

In 1902, Lieutenant Guy Norman and his wife, Louisa Palfrey Norman, purchased the property from John Cushing to be used as a summer home. A native of Newport, Rhode Island, Mr. Norman was a Navy veteran, a member of the Rhode Island Senate and New York Stock Exchange, and a prominent member of the Newport society. Mrs. Norman was the sister of Anna Palfrey Allan who, with her husband Bryce, built an estate in Beverly Cove to the west of the Cushing estate in 1902 (Allenbank (BEV.517) was designed by architect Guy Lowell, today known as Tupper Hall of Endicott College) The Normans appeared to have retained the Cushing house, as footprints for the house shown on the atlases of Beverly are identical.

Shortly after the Normans purchased the property, they engaged the Boston-based architectural firm of Little & Browne to design a Sicilian-style garden to be located between the house and ocean. The Normans were not anomalous in commissioning such a garden, as several owners of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Beverly Cove estates created and maintained ornamental landscapes; among these are the garden at Dawson Hall (Woodberry Point), the gardens of Dudley L. Pickman (off Neptune Street), Harriet M. McGee (27 Ober Street), and Katharine Silsbee (37 Boyles Street). Herbert Browne was the designer of record for the Norman garden, referred to in the firm's account book as the "Garden at Bee Rock." Recorded expenses included fees of the engineering firm of Whitman & Howard, as well as the costs of stone work (\$1,808.00) executed by Aberthaw Construction Company and tile work (\$216.00) completed by Waldo Brothers. Concurrent with the construction of the garden was the building of a fifty feet-long pier, extending from the rock ledge to the west of the garden.

Herbert Wheildon Cotton Browne (1860 – 1946), was educated as an architect at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and studied in Paris and Florence. After serving as a draftsman for two years, he partnered in 1890 with architect Arthur Little, forming the firm of Little and Browne. Boston-based, the firm specialized in the Colonial Revival (Federal) style and designed many homes in the Boston area and on the North Shore. Browne also designed several landscapes, including the gardens of the Spaulding brothers at Sunset Rock in Beverly Farms. His most significant work was the garden designed for Bayard Thayer (Hawthorne Hill) in Lancaster, Massachusetts. Similar to the design of the Norman garden, the Hawthorne Hill landscape included a sequence of garden rooms, each with its distinctive architecture, plantings, and water features, descending the hillside from the side of the house. Details included an Italian-style pergola covered with wisteria.

In 1907, Barr Ferree published a written and illustrated account of the Norman garden in *American Homes and Gardens*. He posited that the ingenuity of Mr. Browne was heavily taxed by the site. Ferree said, "[i]t is not until you have walked down the narrow path to the bounding sea-wall, and peeped over its upcurved top, that you discover that it is practically all made ground, held within a stoutly built retaining wall..." What was originally a "jut of rock" was "walled around on its exposed sides; the space thus formed was filled with earth; and then, on the level ground thus gained, the garden was laid out." He continued, "[it] was walled with cemented borders; paths were laid down according to a set diagram; terraces were contrived of stone and cement; two great columns, with a pergola trellis were stood up in the center of one wall; the first wall was treated with upward curves, with cemented vases directly on the sea; a stone arch served as the exit or ingress, according to your own direction, at the end of another path; and then the center was filled with flower beds – all cement bordered – and the whole was ready for planting." Ferree noted that the garden was novel for both its "situation" and "architectural framework." Nearly all of this garden structure remains today.

Lieutenant Norman died in 1918 at the age of 49, but Louisa continued to own the property. She died in 1935. During the remainder of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the property passed through several owners, and each appears to have preserved the garden, including Francis Burr, who owned the property until 2005. In 2013, the property was subdivided, separating off the area that held the Cushing carriage house and stables.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

### Books

Fox, Pamela, *North Shore Boston, Houses of Essex County 1865-1930*. New York: Acanthus Press, 2005

Loring, Katherine Peabody, *The Earliest Summer Residents of the North Shore and their Houses*. Salem: Essex Institute, 1932.

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## Periodicals & Newspaper Articles

Ferree, Barr, "Notable American Gardens, Mrs. Guy Norman's Sicilian Garden at Beverly Cove, Massachusetts." *American Homes and Gardens*, Volume IV, Number 9, September 1907.

Drake, Stewart A., "Settings for Plutocrats." *Historic New England*, Spring 2014.

"Beverly. Summer White House the Nucleus of a Distinguished Summer Colony," *The New York Times*, June 23, 1912.

"Bacon-Norman Wedding Plans," *The New York Times*, May 22, 1915.

"Lieut. Guy Norman Dead," *The New York Times*, June 4, 1918.

## Maps

D. G. Beers & Company, Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts, Beverly. 1872.

George H. Walker & Company, Atlas of the City of Beverly, Massachusetts. 1897.

Connolly Bros., "Plan of Proposed Pier, Estate of Guy Norman Esq, Beverly, Mass". April 27, 1905

George H. Walker & Company, Atlas of the City of Beverly, Massachusetts. 1907.

Yaeger & Klinge Co., Atlas of the North Shore, Beverly to Magnolia. 1919.

Thomas A. Appleton, C. E., "Plan of Land in Beverly," October 1951.

LeBlanc Survey Associates, Inc., "Subdivision Plan of Land in Beverly," August 22, 2011.

<https://beverlyma.mapgeo.io> (City of Beverly GIS-based mapping)

## Essex County Registry Deeds

Book 1664, Page 235, George Dexter and Robert H. Gardiner (trustees for will of John G. Cushing) to Guy Norman, 1902.

## Websites

The Cultural Landscape Foundation: <https://tclf.org/pioneer/herbert-w-c-browne>

Historic Beverly: <https://beverlyhistory.pastperfectonline.com/>

## Miscellaneous

Account Book of Little & Browne, Historic New England.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Photo 2. The upper terrace taken from the northwest side, looking southeast.



Photo 3. The third terrace, taken from the west side looking east.

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**SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES**



Photo 4. The garden walls, as seen from Crescent Beach, taken from the east side looking west.

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## SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES

The following images are from Ferree, Barr, "Notable American Gardens, Mrs. Guy Norman's Sicilian Garden at Beverly Cove, Massachusetts." *American Homes and Gardens*, Volume IV, Number 9, September 1907.



Photo 5.



Photo 6.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Photo 7.

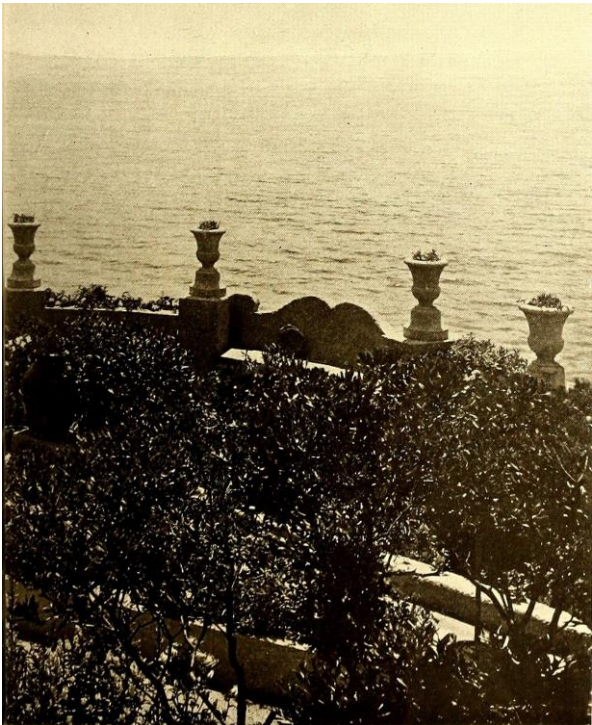


Photo 8.

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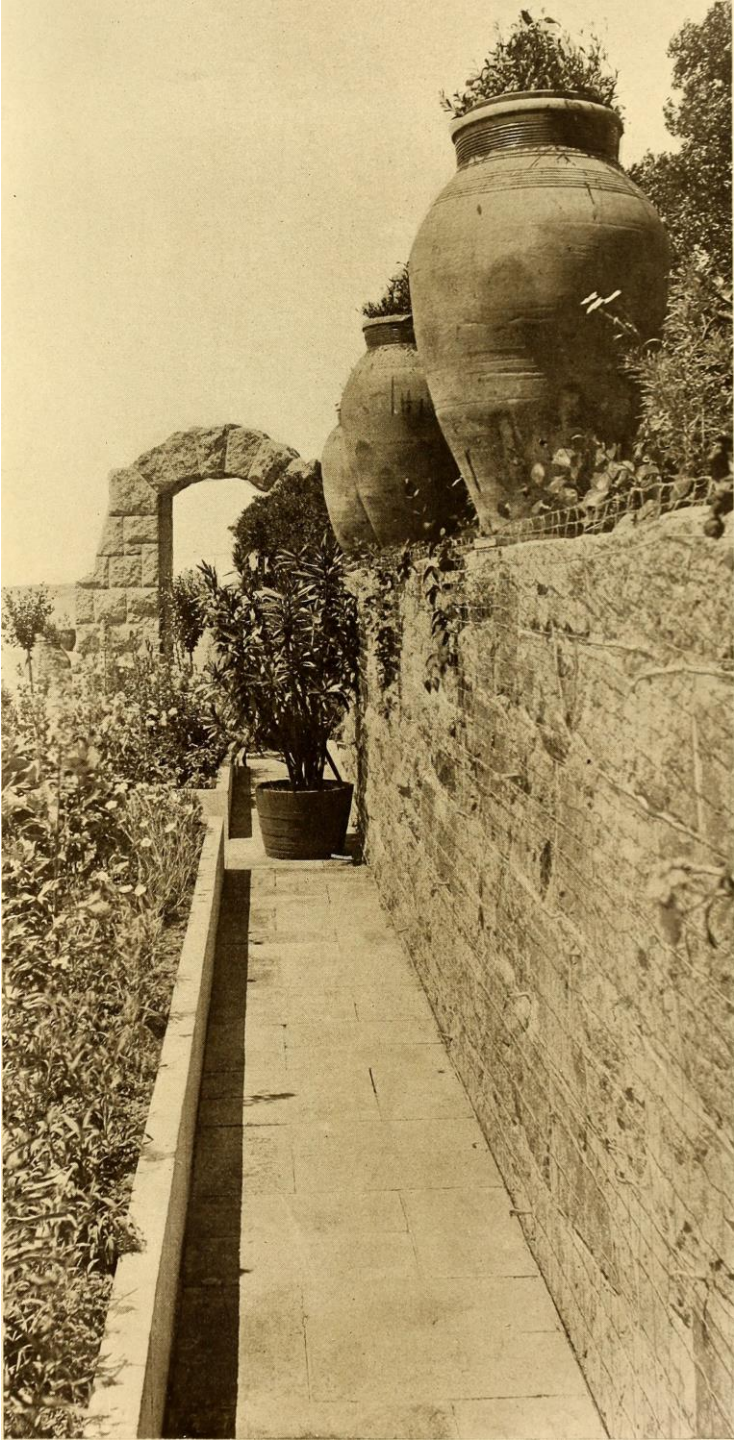
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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES

Photo 9.



Photo 10.



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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

☒ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district

☐ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by Martha Lyon & Wendy Frontiero (for the Beverly Historic District Commission)  
*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Guy Norman Garden, also known as the Garden at Bee Rock, is associated with the summer estate of Guy Norman and his wife, Louisa, who purchased the Beverly Cove property in 1902. A native of Newport, Rhode Island, Guy Norman was a banker and politician and major figure in Newport society. Throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Beverly Cove attracted businessmen and entrepreneurs, including the Normans, who established lavish seaside estates with large homes and manicured grounds. Unlike many of the estates that were demolished in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Normans' garden survives, has been well-maintained, and is largely preserved.

The Italianate style garden exemplifies the work its designer, Herbert Wheildon Cotton Browne, a Boston-based architect who worked in partnership with Arthur Little beginning in 1890. The architecture firm of Little and Browne, known for the Colonial Revival (Federal) style, designed many estates in Beverly and other North Shore communities, as well as the Boston suburbs. Trained as an architect, Browne studied in Italy and drew inspiration for his designs from this experience, in the landscape creating of a series of outdoor terraced rooms, connected along an axis, descending a steep slope. Browne replicated this design at the Normans' property, and it is one the few of his gardens that remains.

Perched on a promontory overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, containing five intimate terraces arranged along a central spine, supported by rustic stone walls, and stepping down towards the sea, the Guy Norman Garden exemplifies the designed landscapes associated with many estates built along the North Shore of Massachusetts at the end of the 1900s and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the only surviving works of architect Herbert W. C. Browne. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, the Guy Norman Garden is recommended for National Register listing with significance at the local and state levels.